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Horse Vs. Mule Colts.

Do not the arguments in the following article, from the Southern Agriculturist, seem to be sound? If so, why not raise more mules in Florida.

A subscriber from Alabama writes: "I have four or five good, ordinary farm mares with which I cultivate my crops. Last year they were all bred to a stallion at a service fee of \$10 each, and will drop foals in the spring. I can breed them to a good jack as conveniently as I can to the stallion, and at a cost of \$7 each. Which would you advise me to breed to?"

There is more money to the farmer in breeding ordinary farm mares to a jack, even at a \$10 fee, than there is in breeding to an ordinary country stallion at the same price. This is true for several reasons. An ordinary mare bred to an ordinary country stallion will very naturally drop an ordinary colt that at weaning time can scarcely be sold for much more than the stud fee, even if a buyer could be found; on the other hand, a mule colt is like a gold dollar—there is always a market value on him at all times, whether he is good, bad or indifferent in quality. But an ordinary mule colt at weaning time will sell for more than double that of a horse colt of the same quality and age, and should the farmer prefer wintering the colts instead of selling, the mule will withstand the cold, consume less feed, and come out the following spring in better condition than the other.

There is another matter to be considered, as important as the above, in breeding ordinary farm mares to a jack. The produce is less liable to the hereditary diseases so prevalent with horses, such as blindness, spavin, etc. It is a remarkable fact, but one that every observant farmer knows who has experimented along this line, that a defective mare, one totally blind or with weak eyes, or with any other hereditary weakness, if bred to a stallion, will oftener than otherwise transmit these defects to her offspring, when, if mated with a jack, will drop a mule foal sound and free from these defects.

There may be certain unusual conditions in the south and southwest under which it would be most advantageous for the farmer to breed his farm mares to a stallion, especially if his mares are big, draft stock—Percherons, Clydes or Belgians—and can be mated with stallions of like breeding, but where these conditions do not exist it is more profitable for him to breed to a jack. In the north and northwest the heavy drafter is used almost exclusively on the farm as well as in the cities. In the south and southwest his services are more limited and his usefulness is confined almost entirely to cities, while the mule takes his place for farm work, hence the active demand at all times for the latter.

But the market for mules is not confined to this country or any part of it. His value as a beast of burden is recognized the world over and it is safe to say that for this purpose more mules have been exported from the United States within the past five years than there has been of horses for the past twenty.

What's the Matter With the Renter?

A correspondent of the Fruit Grower of St. Joseph, Mo., writes an article which we think will interest many who are not renters, but who own the land which they are farming. Perhaps, after reading it you may think that it belongs in the poultry department, but as it refers to cows and other stock, we give it a place here. Moreover it ought to be read by some who would not see it in the poultry department.

When I got married some thirty years ago and started out on my own hook, I did just what thousands of others do every year, or I might say what they must do. I rented a farm, bought tools, implements and teams on time and started in with a strong heart and arm. After two years of hard work we gathered up the paid-for and partly paid for stuff and made a sale. Came out ahead only a few dollars for two years' hard work.

Then I went to railroading and have never farmed since. I have had nearly thirty years in which to figure out why I did not come out better on the farm. I think I have it figured.

The trouble with me then, and with many renters right now, was that I had my investments in things that were decreasing in value. In most instances I was paying interest on things that were decreasing, burning the candle at both ends, as it were. For instance, I was paying interest on money invested in horses, machinery and other things that were getting less valuable all the time. It took the proceeds from my labor to keep up the losses.

Like many others did then, and do yet, I depended on selling the raw product. The grain and hay was marketed, the live stock consisted of horses principally, and except their feed, all grain was marketed.

After nearly thirty years of meditation I have come to this conclusion: Renters farm too much land, go in debt too much and do not keep enough profitable stock. Surplus work horses do not produce, even those that are used, beyond the labor, are poor investments. A yard full of machinery does not produce beyond a few weeks' use.

If I were going to try it over I would be a crank on producing. Everything would have to gain in value

or add to itself in some way. My team would be breed mares, would try to shift my little investments towards buying a good cow and more of them as fast as I could. The premises would be adorned with some good breed sows and I would help the other half out with the hen business.

Yes, I would have to have a wagon and some implements, that's true, but I would make one wagon do, and when I bought implements, would need them first. After getting these things I would go to a little more expense and keep them under cover. Would try to make them last ten years instead of three or four.

I have it figured that renters on the average have from \$1,000 to \$2,000 tied up in poor investments, and that in most instances it takes his entire earnings to keep up the losses or shrinkage in values. Also that inasmuch as he depends on selling grain for the income, his pay days are too far apart. He spends what it comes to before he gets it, or in other words, after all, he gets no money to spend as he wishes.

Looking through a combination of front sights and hind sights, my advice to any young man would be to keep his investments in things that produce or increase in value, just as much as it is possible to do so.

I do a manufacturing mail order business, and through my correspondence with people in all parts of the country, that are in all professions, object lessons of great value come to my notice. Let me mention two instances: An old man, past 65, lost his companion. He had been renting here and there and dickered around to make both ends meet. His wife had been helping all that an aged person could. After he was alone, their two cows and some hens became company for him; in a little while he discovered that they were bringing in a small revenue every day. This happened four years ago. Today he has seven Jersey cows and 500 Leghorn hens, and is making more money than any renter, or in fact any farmer in that locality. He does nothing but play with the cows and hens; he calls it play, and I can be excused for doing the same. This is no fairy tale by any means. I have mentioned him in my articles before and gave his name, but it serves to burden him with correspondence.

Another instance started three years ago. A man owed a mortgage of \$1,600 on his farm, had never been able to meet it. Three years ago his last boy married and moved to himself. In his correspondence he stated that he was broken down in health, wanted to know what I thought of his prospect of making a living at poultry raising and renting out the farm. He stated that he had a fifteen-acre orchard that he could retain. I advised him to try it, but to keep some of his best cows and some brood sows.

He went ahead and made a sale. The proceeds of the sale cut 60 per cent out of the mortgage. A recent letter from my old friend stated that he is out of debt, has eight good cows, a horse, some hogs and lots of chickens.

I mention these two particular cases for the reason that in both instances the men were practically worn out with hard work and as a last recourse and as a drowning man grabs at a straw, they accidentally discovered a better way to make some money.

The Land Question in Virginia.

A year or more ago we published two or more articles about the Torrens system of registering land titles. We have just found, in the Southern Planter, a long article on the subject. It explains the method of establishing a title and gives the reasons for adopting the system. We hope that our readers, and the press of the state, will use their influence to have the next legislature pass a law making the Torrens system the legal method of transferring land titles in Florida.

The State claims to be the owner—the original and ultimate owner—of all her lands. This ownership first appears in her land grants, and is now found in the exercise of the right of eminent domain, of escheats and in the levying of taxes.

Claiming and exercising these original rights and sovereign powers, it is the duty of the State to grant good titles to her citizens and enable them to keep their titles good under the just administration of equitable laws.

This plain duty has never heretofore been performed by the State and the time has now come when she must meet her high obligation.

In 1900 there were 103,806 male citizens of the Commonwealth assessed for taxes on real estate, valued, in each instance, at not less than \$300.00. These citizens represent the thrift and intelligence of the Commonwealth, and their rights must be respected by our law makers.

The real estate of Virginia is assessed at 343 3-4 millions, or nearly three times as much as all the personal property returns for taxation in the State.

You can sell your personal property or borrow money on it quickly and at little expense. You do not have to employ a lawyer to examine the title to your horse or cow, to your oats and hay, nor to your stock and bonds.

If you try to sell your land or borrow money on it, the first question is: Have you a good title?

No one will buy or lend you money without being satisfied about your title. It must be examined by a lawyer, and you have to pay the bill.

It does not matter how often the